

**Prison Action News
PO Box 832
Watertown, MA 02472**

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Prison Action News is a newsletter for prisoners worldwide to report on their struggles and acts of resistance from behind bars. All submissions must be **RECEIVED** by **January 1st or July 1st** and be in compliance with the guidelines below. Please note that we retain the right as editors to alter submissions for grammatical and content-related issues. Prison Action News is one part of the multi-faceted Prison Abolition movement. We believe that the writing in Prison Action News is as important as poetry or political essays, but is often less represented.

History:

The idea for Prison Action News came out of the 2007 Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) Network gathering. We wanted to create a venue for prisoners to share updates of their activities, similar to the updates we wrote in the network newsletter. As people on the outside, we can facilitate this dialog of prison resistance, and help our comrades stay informed about the inspiring actions others are taking. We accept submissions from prisoners and prison groups worldwide, and bilingual writing. With your help this newsletter will be a success- if you know of resistance taking place that is not represented here, please send us a submission, and spread the word!

Please send ALL SUBMISSIONS, SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS and ADDRESS CHANGES to:

Prison Action News PO Box 832 Watertown, MA 02472
prisonactionnews@riseup.net

Artwork (above): Santos "Cherrie" Valenzuela, Delano, CA

"All is for all! If the man and the woman bear their fair share of work, they have a right to their fair share of all that is produced by all, and that share is enough to secure them well-being. No more of such vague formulas as "The Right to work," or "To each the whole result of his labour." What we proclaim is "The Right to Well-Being: Well-Being for All!"



Peter Kropotkin - The Conquest of Bread (1907)

Corcoran, CA - November 2017

The evolution of most California Prisons disgust me because prisoners relinquish power for the illusion of being accepted by those hired to maintain our captivity. All of a sudden, lifelong criminals and gang members fancy the idea of being 'cool' with officials, some even believing they're friends. The officials use prisoners' influence, status, and of course their ignorance to do everything, from inciting ongoing incidents of violence to hustling contraband. In exchange, perks like a false sense of freedom from being out of the cell all day everyday, or some advanced notice of a search to come is offered in return, feeding that illusion of self-importance and belonging. They actually believe because of some relationship in which a dirty cop relies on them to be just as foul, they are special and somehow better than neighboring prisoners, even going so far as to compete maliciously for officials' acceptance.

While what I describe may have been going on for sometime now, currently it has reached a point where it's some kind of fad, more apparent and open at many of the level 4 yards I've been on since 2004. As a reminder, resistance can be as simple as refusing to be or become what they once called house negro, jig-a-boo, or porch monkey.

Personally, my resistance comes from not being a follower, or open to being used by anyone just so I may feel better about self or the outcome of my life. Resistance is informing those who fit the bill that when you run out of use, your official friends, partner, or handlers will throw you away as so many before you. Resistance is loving yourself more than that!

John Bleep Williams #V34099
 Corcoran State Prison
 3L-05-126
 PO Box 3471
 Corcoran, CA 93212

Obliterating food contamination in prisons out of retaliation - October 2017

Revolutionary greetings,
My name is Lucky. A blahk power fist salute to comrade Melody Simpson that was severely abused in the following was: sexually assaulted, mail damaging, and her food was infested with bodily fluids at the Lane Murray Unit in Gatesville, TX. Your defiant spirit is recognized and admirable, and I stand in the same spirit with you compassionately. Comrade Melody Simpson, if you're reading this article, contact me ASAP for further support and action. I've been under attack for many years fighting oppressors on all levels. My food has been contaminated with bodily fluids out of retaliation and in attempt to break my defiant spirit. They will never break it, and I will never fake it, because I have what it takes to make it. I'm uh blahk uncompromising revolutionary brother. Most inmates here have been broken by the oppressors' slave mentality tactics. The bought-out Uncle Toms are the main pawns in the white racist chess game against strong defiant blahk brothers, divide and oppress. Most of the blahks here at the Clements Unit have been bought. We must work through this platform to collect the mind of those who are victors of fecal/bodily fluids infested food. Notice, I said victors, not victims. They are in the wrong, we are in the right, victory is ours when we move collectively, unity is our path to victory. The law of justice always rules. Fighting and tearing apart this demon of contaminating food with bodily fluids, fecal matter, glass or psychotropic medication is defeatable, but this victorious fight isn't for wimps or the fainthearted, it's for the passionate. Only those that have the I can, I will attitude need to respond. Because we can, we will, we dare, we do! We can and we will obliterate the contamination of prisoners' food with bodily fluids, fecal matter, glass, psychotropic medications out of retaliation for exposing prison abuses. Victory is ours, but we must as uh collective fight with definiteness of purpose, persistence and a burning desire to obliterate these evils which have no power, but the power we give them. We will infuse this action plan in every prison nationally, If you're part of the free-world readership or within prison walls and want to participate in the defeat of this giant demon of food contamination, contact me now, for further strategy to fortify our revolutionary brothers and sisters who are facing this injustice or who have faced this problem before. If you have family members who have suffered in this way, contact me now and join us in the defeat of this injustice. No matter what your nationalistic identity is, you're welcome to join this victorious fight.

Comrade Lucky, stiff resistance!

Mr. Patrick O'Neal Mozee 144-8936
Clements Unit
9601 Spur 591
Amarillo, TX 79107

Guidelines

1. A submission MUST NOT exceed 500 words, with no exceptions. Submissions over 500 words will be edited down, or if this is not possible to do while keeping a cohesive narrative, not included in publication.
2. We will not accept submissions with racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise oppressive language.
3. An update may be a report on resistance activities of individual prisoners or prison groups (this can include, but is not limited to, radical book groups, hunger strike, general strike, letter writing campaigns, etc.).
4. A report SHOULD NOT be a political essay or a report on prison conditions, rather, the response and resistance to these conditions.
5. Requests for support from folks on the outside, or requests for financial support, will not be published. The primary audience and readership of PAN is incarcerated people.
6. PAN accepts entries of artwork and illustrations.
7. One submission per group, per prison, per newsletter. If you submit more than once during the submission period, editors will select which entry to publish, unless you specifically state which one to use.
8. We will not report on gang activity.
9. We accept bilingual entries (when one language is English), as well as Spanish entries! Aceptamos la escritura en español.
10. Entries may be submitted for publication by prison groups and organizations, or individuals, and may be submitted for publication with the name and contact information of the writer, or anonymously, to protect their identity. If your name and address appear on your PAN submission, we will publish them, unless you tell us otherwise.

Please note that we are a very small collective made up entirely of volunteers. We are unable to provide any assistance or advocacy beyond the publication of this newsletter. Unfortunately this also means we cannot respond to every letter we receive. We always try to inform writers if their submission does not fall within our guidelines so they can resubmit.

Prison Action News CAN accept donations of stamps or envelopes, but can NOT accept checks or money orders.

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Artwork by Zehra Doğan,
Kurdish political prisoner
locked up in Turkey for her art
against Turkish Fascism. More
about Doğan on page 7
And Turkish Invasion of
Revolutionary Rojava (West
Kurdistan), on page 31

Disclaimer:

The content of the PAN newsletter is intended solely for information and education. Descriptions and claims appearing in PAN have not been independently verified and should be considered unsubstantiated. Moreover, PAN topics do not necessarily reflect the perspective of any individual involved in its content or production. Likewise, PAN topics do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of any recipient or of any individual or group mentioned in PAN. This newsletter in no way encourages or supports any illegal behavior. PAN only intends to provide a printed forum for conversation and news. We regret if any PAN entry or passage is misconstrued as a violation of state and/or federal regulations.

find it we stand as one regardless of their attempts to abuse us further. If they want to support their cause, then it's "alternative sacrifices" to be made as the solution which could result in a very serious act, necessary acts.

You build unity and the public groups will be there to support you. We inmates in every state will support you. We all endure the same things from these racist, prejudice, sadistic, malicious abusers.

All of you must put together a team of prisoners to present to the administration of the wrongs an employee is doing to give them a chance to respond appropriately. If they choose to allow that complaint by you all to go unanswered, you then must commence to the next decided phase of your protest. Peace and accountability is the goal, but if that don't work you must decide as a group what the next course of action will be. It can only be one result: change for the betterment.

9-10-16 we the prisoners sent a message to the Michigan Department of Corrections that we will not tolerate being abused. We seek opportunities to be responsible men and they sought to attack us and it cost them 23 million dollars as K.C.F. was set afire by a group that decided that they needed a real message, and got it.

Now they have opened up their ears. Wonder why? Wake up, stand up, fight as one.

There are many organizations in society that support us and each of you should contact them, plug yourself in, let us know what is going on so we can all be one. We prisoners in Michigan are growing stronger from facility to facility.

You can read about the K.C.F., go to Paul Egan DetroitFreePress.com or Twitter Pegan.4 or you can call the reporter and seek a copy of all of his reports on Michigan prisons.

We are building a relationship with all inmates of all races, sexualities, religions. We Are One is our platform.

We seek the opportunities we deserve. They say we are slaves because we are convicted felons, 13th amendment so they pay us minimum wage for jobs at 87 cents a day up to \$3.10 a day. This is going to change soon or ?

So you all need to get together and list all of the things that you need to become better: wages increase, parole board reviews, etc., vocational, educational, medical, legal access programs, etc. Make a list of what you seek as a group and push that to the administration. Spread the message to all units, all prisoners meet up with all groups, find out what they think and bring your attention together and act on it.

It can only get brighter as it's dark now. We are the future, change is gonna come if you rise up as one.

Juivonne Littlejohn 141899
Baraga Correctional Facility
13924 Wadaga Rd.
Baraga, MI 49908

Baraga, MI - December 2017

My name is Juivonne Littlejohn, prison #141899, age 60 and I am an activist for all, black, white, yellow, brown, all races and sexualities. I don't discriminate, period. I bring to you this herein column of what you must do to make changes in yourself and with others for change to come. Take heed.

Awareness

Despite what we do to cause what they did to us in response to what we did to become their prisoners (slaves), we must face reality and place the blame on ourselves for our actions. Once you'll reach that true state of mind, then it's time to focus further on ourselves while in their slave ships (modern prisons) and utilize all that is available to us by them which is: Access to all the educational materials we can get our hands on to develop ourselves. You must recognize all of the truths about yourself and face all adversities before you as a man.

After the becoming

Once you have recognized yourself, and have developed, it's time for you to stop the crying and stand up for your rights. The cost of being a man can cause others to bring adverse actions against you by the individuals who are a despisers of your affirmation.

The commencement

The commencement forward is the plan to ensure your rights are not subjected to afflictions by others, and this does not exclude prison officials who are the ones that every prisoner in every state claim are the abusers of them.

If this is true in the prisons you are at then it's time you all (we) develop a coalition with each other in your unit, wing, rock, who is being subjected to this form of abuse, come together, develop a unified plan to deal with these malfeasance employees. As a group you have more power than individually, so you must band together and as a group deal with that employee by whatever the best means necessary to prevent further wrongdoings to any of you.

As you know you will have repercussions for the actions you all take, but it will create a change because disruption causes people at the top to want to know why the actions by all of the prisoners against the wrongdoer. In doing this you have created unity that you must continue on all matters. Don't change the approach. Deal with all employees all the same. It lets them know if they bring shit, they get shit. Stand your ground. Don't bow down until you've accomplished what you set out to accomplish. They'll reach a determination and if it's in your favor then you've accomplished the goal which is to let that particular officer know that his behavior towards you and others is over. The other officers and administration must be told what will no longer be tolerated and that it was because of their failure to protect you all from these abusers, you all have formed a group unified and will sacrifice all of your privileges and if necessary future to stop these employees' acts against you.

98% of prison staff are not abusive. We don't tolerate abuse and when we

NEW PRISON GROUPS AND PROGRAMS

Positive Actions Create Everything - July 2017

We have a new support group at C.M.F. so let me tell you about it. I wanted to create a group for the L.G.B.T. population where they not only support each other but also outside L.G.B.T. centers and inmate publications the C.D.C.R. allows inside. So I put together a proposal for the PACE group: Positive Actions Create Everything.

And so the PACE group began in January of 2017. I facilitate the group with a staff sponsor. The group meets each week. Half the group's work is we pick a subject such as the word equality. Then each member decides if they want to do an essay, poem or art about equality. Once the pieces are completed, I then send them to publications such as Black & Pink, Prison Health News, Hearts on a Wire, Ultra Violet, the Beat Within, and now also to Prison Action News. The publications have the option of putting the pieces created in their newspapers and zines.

The PACE group members also put together support letters to L.G.B.T. centers throughout the the US and support letters to the publications mentioned as well as the Transgender Justice Project, Gender Health Center, the Word is Out in Canada, Flying over Walls, just to name a few.

Our whole purpose is to support the outside L.G.B.T. community and others. We ask nothing in return. We just offer support. We receive a lot of mail from the outside about the group and from prisoners in the US about how to start a support group.

The group works because everyone in the group puts in the effort to make the world around them better. As a trans woman I never thought that I would be able to create a group inside a men's prison, that others could be who they say they are, even if it's only for one hour a week.

The response from inside has been very supportive, so supportive that we are waiting for an approval to do our own zine and showcase the work of the L.G.B.T. population.

We can all be better if we try a little harder each day.

“Positive Actions Change Everything”

Lisa Strawn
D01271 V-240
PO Box 2000
Vacaville, CA 95696

Broken in 2Piece Productions- December 2017

A revolution, or anything that interrupts social order, may afford opportunities for the individuals seeking change. My name is Donzell Jones 1139853 and just like you, I too have tears for those in trouble here, and in hell. I am an inmate in Reidsville, GA at Georgia State Prison, but before I was sent here I was a resident at Atlanta Transitional Center, located in Atlanta, GA. From there I was afforded an opportunity to transition back into society in a way that set me apart from just about every state prisoner in Georgia. While at the transitional center, I created Broken in 2Piece Productions. Here's the info. To look at it go to youtube and search Donzell Jones. I have a profile picture of a skull and the channel's name is Broken in 2Piece Productions. All of that was created while inside the Georgia Dept. of Corrections, so that makes me a "history maker" a.k.a. 2Piece, they say the man that changes direction in his life lives twice, and as I read the Prison Action News articles, that is all I see, leaders standing up and speaking out. Those who have decided to take responsibility for their lives. I, too, have felt the hand of corruption in the worst way, because of Broken in 2Piece Productions creations, I was said to have some type of mental psychosis on capitol grounds. I was set up by the warden at Atlanta Transitional Center to get me away from there, depriving me of what the state work release program promises. I never have had any mental illness, nor does it run in my family, but because of hatred, to conceal its own abuses and encroachments, have made a mountain out of a molehill.

I've created "Broken." It started out as a group of individuals waking up to the drama in our lives, taking the necessary steps, now we're becoming a community of leaders. I have a platform that makes me a mass communicator. I know how to create urban films, and I will be heard, as I am already known on Twitter, as the eternal struggle all the way in England. The only difference between then and now, like a siren of old who sang under the sea, I got something to say. My purpose is to hold up a mirror to nature and show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. I am not up to small deceit, or any sinful games. Give me a man that is capable of a devotion to anything, listen to an exiled son's appeal, when death comes breaking into the circle of our friends and family, words fail us. One cannot continually disappoint a continent, bear as witness: come the world against me, "Broken," yet shall stand. Career criminals, a message for you. I have come up from the crowds in a moment of silence, broken. It's a soul of humor, Jezebel heard of it, one that feareth God and no other hard as a piece of the nether millstone. I invite you to bring me men with new eras in their minds. Here's the great advantage: it is through art that the world must see corruption from afar. The Atlanta Journal Constitution news has been contacted and directed to that youtube channel and this egregious act of the DOC. My doors are open to any organizations and groups, Georgia Department of Corrections doesn't allow correspondence from prison to prison. No need to worry, however, my release date is Spring 2018.

To a revolutionist, justice is the only workshop, crowns and thorns perish dead at the feet of the wrong...broken

Ely, NV- October 2017

Dear N.D.O.C. readers,
A new law/case passed and wow, rather y'all should be aware. Mitchell v. Lopez 2011 US Dist. Nev. Lexis 16524 3:08-CV-D38Z-ECR (RAM) dated 1/19/2011.

The failure to respond to a grievance within the time allotted by A.R. 740 (45 days) means that there is no available remedy to you, and you may either proceed to the next level or you have completed the grievance process.

Miller v. Norris, 247 F.3d 736, 740 (8th Cir 2001) (holding that "a remedy that prison officials prevent a prisoner utilizing is not an available remedy" under § 1997 (e)).

Sapp v. Kimbrell, 623 F.3d B13 B22 (9th Cir 2010) (citing Nunez v. Duncan, 591 F.3d 1217, 122b (9th Cir 2010)).

Brown v. Croak, 312 F.3d 109, 111-112 (3rd Cir 2002). In Brown the Third Circuit considered whether an inmate could rely on instructions by prison officials that he had to await the outcome of a pending investigation when this ultimately rendered the grievance procedure unavailable to him. Brown, 312 F.3d at 112.

The Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) requires that an inmate exhaust only those administrative remedies "as are available." 42 U.S.C. § 1997 e (a).

The Ninth Circuit has recognized that PLRA "does not require exhaustion when circumstances render administrative remedies effectively unavailable."

It's the law.

Sincerely and appreciatively,

Brian Eugene Lepley
#58197
Ely State Prison
PO Box 1989
Ely, NV 89301-1989

COMMENTARY AND CALLS TO ACTION

FL - December 2017

The transition from Access Correction's MP3/MP4 digital music player to JPay's tablet program, with all those awesome features, is great. And, if you invested any money in Access Correction Song Credits for their MP3/MP4 digital music player, so is the loss. File for reimbursal! This is loss of property (per. Chapter 33), deprivation of property (under the 14 Const. Amend) and once administrative remedies are exhausted, cause for a tort claim or civil complaint for injury and monetary damages incurred. It is also like taking candy from a baby, if you let it. "I know FL DOC inmates ain't laying down like dat!" Pick up that pen, those informal grievances, etc. Have your families get involved, email Tallahassee and all. I'm 'bout my money! Are you?

100%
Eric B.

P.s. Don't contribute to FDOC's pockets by inaction. Outside help welcomed too.

Here's how to reach me by mail:

Donzell Jones
69 N Gay St.
Cuthbert, GA 39840
Email: jonesdonzell45@gmail.com

Repression of Minorities and Political Activists by Turkish Government

Zehra Doğan is a painter, journalist, and editor from Turkey. She happens to be Kurdish, an ethnic group whose former homeland was carved up after World War 1, now divided between four other countries: Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. As many other governments beat down their internal scapegoats, the Turkish state is actively repressing Kurdish and other minorities. Since the 1980s, the Turkish government has murdered tens of thousands of people and destroyed or depopulated thousands of Kurdish and other minorities' villages, a practice the state resumed in 2016. Under the dictatorship of Recep Erdoğan, Turkish police and military arrested 1,478 Kurdish activists and even 78 mayors, as well as both co-heads of the major Turkish political party that is sympathetic to minority groups in the country, HDP.

Doğan painted the image, below, of the destruction of the Kurdish town of Nusaybin, which she based off of photos the government took of their evil work.



For her artwork, the Turkish government arrested Doğan on July 21, 2016. "I was given two years and 10 months [jail time] only because I painted Turkish flags on destroyed buildings. However, they [Turkish government] caused this. I only painted it," Doğan said in a tweet after the sentencing.

PRISON GROUPS UPDATES

Free Virginia Movement - May 2017

The Political Action Committee of the Free Virginia Movement
“Capitalism causes crime. Overwhelmingly, the victims of crime are poor and Third World people. Street crime is caused and perpetuated by joblessness and underemployment; by a ruling class that uses people for its own profit and discards them when it has no more profitable use for them. The capitalist prison and its bureaucracy is a loathsome parasite on society. Its sole purpose is to administer the warehousing and repression of human beings for whom capitalism has no use and no solution.”—George Jackson Brigade, in Capitalism Is Organized Crime

The Free Virginia Movement (FVM) is proposing the formation of a Political Action Committee (PAC) which is a major point in Our Organizing Strategy.

Our PAC, once operational, will be capable of transforming the social, political, and economic reality for all Virginians—including incarcerated people and those who feel neglected and marginalized by a Virginia State Government and its politicians, most of whom serve the interests of the ruling capitalist elites—by: 1) educating members and the general public about political candidates for statewide offices at election time via social media, fliers, town hall meetings, assemblies, forums, workshops, etc.; 2) fund raising, pooling, and contributing funds to the campaigns of political candidates for statewide offices most likely to advance our interests and to lobby against those candidates who, once in office, are most likely to act against the needs, concerns, and interests of incarcerated, Black, Brown, poor, low-income, working-class, and other marginalized and oppressed people; 3) and organizing and mobilizing a powerful grassroots voting bloc capable of influencing statewide elections in OUR favor.

This is needed because Virginia’s government and criminal injustice system—its laws, police departments, circuit courts, and prisons—are all biased against Black, Brown, poor, low-income, marginalized, disadvantaged, disenfranchised, and working-class people, including women, Muslims, immigrants, and LGBTQ people. We are all disposable people within a capitalist patriarchal system which places profit over human lives, and which discards us into prisons and jails when it has no more profitable use for us.

In order to change this dynamic and overcome our shared-oppression, we must UNITE and ORGANIZE, BUILD POWER and MOBILIZE to FORCE change! It is time that incarcerated people, their families, and other Black, Brown, poor, low-income, marginalized, disadvantaged, disenfranchised, and working class people organize themselves under the banner of the Free Virginia Movement and its PAC into a force that can and will transform who has political power and control in Virginia and how that power and control affect our lives.

There are approximately 38,000 people incarcerated in Virginia’s prisons. If each incarcerated person and at least three of their family members, friends, or asso-

Prisoners have sent me letters asking me to send them the address and more information about the Job Accommodation Network. Contact them at:

Kim Cordingly, Ph.D.- Lead Consultant/Self-Employment
Job Accommodation Network
West Virginia University
PO Box 6080
Morgantown, WV 26500-6080
800-526-7232 (v) 877-718-9403 (TTY)
<http://AskJAN.org>

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a program of the US Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), is a free information, counseling, and referral service providing resources on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other relevant laws, workplace accommodations for people with disabilities, and assistance with self-employment, and small business development options.

“Once a government is committed to the principle of silencing the voice of opposition, it has only one way to go, and that is down the path of increasingly repressive measures, until it becomes a source of terror to all its citizens and creates a country where everyone lives in fear.”

—Harry S. Truman, August 8, 1950

NEVER AGAIN!!!

Robert S. Tabak

SOLIDARITY: WORKING ACROSS THE BARS

Charleston, MO - December 2017

There is a great organization that helps prisoners that I want you to tell everyone about:

Dennis Sobin, Director
Safe Streets Art Foundation
2514 Virginia Ave., NW #58043
Washington, DC 20037
www.SafeStreetsArts.org
www.PrisonsFoundation.org

The Foundation exhibits art by imprisoned artists, publishes books by prisoners, and presents prisoner-written plays at the Kennedy Center. Its director, Dennis Sobin, spent 10 years in prison after being falsely accused of a non-existent crime. Upon his release, he wrote several books, and received many awards for his fight against injustice, and over-incarceration in America.

20% of the population in this country has serious mental health problems. 33.5% of the homeless population in this country has serious mental health problems. 54% of the prisoners in this country have serious mental health problems. 80% of the children that go into foster care end up in prison.

This is a direct effect of the closings of state mental hospitals in the 1980's. All four groups get little or no counseling or rehabilitation programs to help us!!! Why is this?

For more information about this problem, contact:
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Development Office
3808 N. Fairfax Dr., Suite 100
Arlington, VA 22203-1700
(703) 524-7600 or 1-800-944-6264 ext 794
Email: development@nami.org / Web: www.nami.org
NAMI helpline: 1-800-950-6264

ciates register with the FVM/PAC and donate a minimum of just \$5, we can organize the mobilization of over 150,000 people inside and outside of prison with a war chest of over a quarter million dollars that we can use to accomplish OUR GOALS.

It is the late-great Howard Zinn who said that we cannot be neutral on a moving train. Amidst the hate, division, uncertainty, and turmoil that has swept the country since the "election" of Donald Trump to the White House, either we are going to allow ourselves to be forced backwards to a time when people of color, women, immigrants, and LGBTQ people were considered property and noncitizens and thus had no control over our lives and no rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, or we are going to move forward and begin the historical task of UNITING and BUILDING and ORGANIZING a powerful grassroots political base in Virginia in order to change things ourselves. There is no in between.

People, the days of mere lip service and half-ass organizing are over. Now is the time for action! The power structure has been duping us for far too long and so we must step up and retake control over our lives and the future of our families and communities.

We are currently seeking individuals to fill the following positions: Director, State Coordinator, State Representative, National Representative, Treasurer, Volunteers, Fundraisers, Donors, and Sponsors.

If you are serious about building the FVM and our PAC, if you're serious about achieving REAL change, and if you are able to fill one or more of the above positions, please contact me by email at uhururowe76@yahoo.com, or you can contact me directly by downloading the JPay mobile app to your smartphone, log on, and sign up to exchange e-messages with me.

NONE OF US ARE TRULY FREE UNTIL ALL ARE FREE!

Uhuru Rowe #113545
Sussex 2 State Prison
24427 Musselwhite Dr.
Waverly, VA 23891
Blog: <https://consciousprisoner.wordpress.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/supportuhuru>

United Panther Movement, Red Fist Alliance - November 2017

The United Panther Movement, Red Fist Alliance is maintaining an anarcho/socialist study group here in solidarity with the Antifa movement, and we are always looking for material that is current. We are always looking to work with affinity groups. For more information, contact Robert Thrower #44717, San Carlos Correctional Facility, PO Box 3, Pueblo CO 81003. Up with the rebels. To find out more visit our blog at <http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/1491>



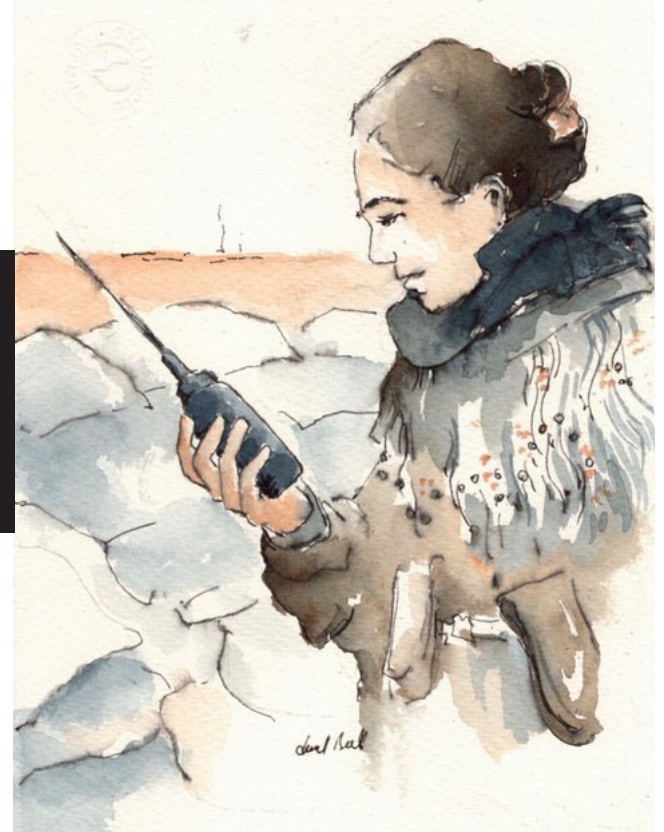
Darrell Hann #592792
SWSP
Bridgeton, NJ 08302
July, 2017

Duane Tipton #69967
Lovelock Correctional Center
1200 Prison Rd.
Lovelock, NV 89419

Turkish state, allies, invade Afrin, Rojava - January 2018

In January of 2018, the Turkish army and their Syrian proxies launched a long-threatened invasion of Rojava, or "Western Kurdistan," in the autonomous and revolutionary north of Syria. Turkey had previously attacked the isolated Rojavan canton of Afrin, pounding it with artillery and aircraft, before launching a ground invasion. Brave men and women of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) stand between the Turkish army and the revolutionary territory of the Democratic Confederation of Northern Syria.

Militia woman
from the
Women's
Defense Units
(YPJ). Art by
Janet Biehl



Nevada Department of Corrections stratagem continues hiding the truth - September 2017

21+ months later no institutional investigation and/or any type Nevada State actor has spoken with me of occurrence that left myself in a blood bath out of Warm Springs Correctional Center December 7, 2015 under then Warden Harold Wickham who became Deputy Director in May 2017.

The Nevada Inspector General Pam Del Pondo finally responded to occurrence GR200630-16749 and GR00630-37989: “Your actions, temper, and verbal dialogue on the tier resulted in the assault of your person.” Receiving that on 9-12-17. Those of you who know my character know that statement is an outright lie and need letters of reference/affidavits sent to my federal case Warren v. Nevada Dept. Corr. et al 3:17-CV-00 228-MMB-WGC.

Nevada should stand against negligence and violence instead of pushing a prisoner “over the edge” as Oscar Velasquez, a prisoner who committed suicide in May of 2015 in Administrative Segregation Unit. That is only being covered up as my occurrence (12-2-14, 12-7-15) but I am alive as well, as tired and will continue to fight for my rights, Oscar, and any and all prisoners.

To all Nevada inmates of any race, let us break this chain of hatred, gossip-mongering going into 2018 and fight with the pen against those who keep us chained up. Do not allow the adverse actions taken by NDOC prison officials to be the prisoners’ downfall.

Keith A. Warren 23562
Lovelock CC
1200 Prison Rd.
Lovelock, NV 89419

Lovelock, NV- December 2017

This is Tippy here to give you an update on my status. I’m still at Lovelock Corr. Ctr. and still getting retaliated against. Administration and the Inspector General’s office believes that the officer was in the right, and I was wrong in all aspects.

I do know Amber is still in the hole here at LCC and she is getting a lot of sexual harassment from LCC c/o’s. To write to Amber you should write to Justin Mendoza #1079266 the same address as myself. I want to shout out to Amber and let her know I love her and will always be there for her anywhere she goes. I also want to shout out to Daisy and to let her know I am always here for her. Daisy, I will be sending out a letter.

I want everyone to know that my civil case number is Tipton vs. Guice 3:17-CU-00032RCJ-UPC and still waiting on the court. I do plan on doing another lawsuit on LCC. Peace out Tippy!

DIRECT ACTION/NON-COMPLIANCE

Alabama peanut butter jailbreak ends with capture of final inmate - August 2017

By Amy Held

<https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/08/02/541115659/ala-peanut-butter-jail-escape-ends-with-capture-of-final-inmate>

The headlines rife with puns about nutty escapes and sticky situations nearly write themselves. But the jam that Walker County Jail in Jasper, Ala., found itself in after 12 inmates skipped out using peanut butter Sunday appears to have ended with the capture of the final escapee on Tuesday.

Walker County Sheriff James Underwood said the inmates were able to trick a new jailer by using peanut butter — scraped from sandwiches — to alter the number over the exit and persuading the guard to open it, thinking it was the entrance to a cell. The 12 men were then able to scale a barbed wire fence, reports WBRC.

“Changing some numbers on the door with peanut butter — that may sound crazy,” Underwood said at a news conference on Monday according to AL.com. “But these people are crazy like a fox.”

“We slipped up,” Underwood added. As for the duped prison guard, “he made a mistake,” Underwood said. “He’s a young guy, he hasn’t been there that long. This young man was a weak link, and they knew it.”

The Sheriff’s Office said six of the inmates were captured shortly after their escape. Five more were caught within 24 hours of walking free, reports AL.com.

By Tuesday, the 12th and final escapee, Brady Kilpatrick, 24, was captured in Tequesta, Fla. He had been the only one to make it out of Walker County.

The inmates, ranging in age from 18 to 30, were facing charges including drug possession, theft and attempted murder.

Underwood said some people will receive rewards for tipping off police to the inmates’ whereabouts, but others may face criminal charges for aiding and abetting them. “They had some outside help,” Underwood said, reports AL.com.

And in Martin County, Fla., where Kilpatrick is being held, Sheriff William D. Snyder was asked by reporters whether he is worried the man facing drug charges will break free from jail once again. Snyder responded, “I can tell you this: He won’t be getting peanut butter.”

Florida prisoners set to strike January 15th against prison slavery - December 2017

<https://itsgoingdown.org/florida-prisoners-set-strike-january-15th-prison-slavery/>

This January prisoners in Florida will continue to build on the momentum of nearly two years of uprising and rebellion, launching a statewide strike on January 15th. We had the opportunity to speak with one of the organizers from within a Florida facility. The interview is brief but powerful.

According to *Fight Toxic Prisons*:

[T]hese prisoners plan to initiate a work stoppage or “laydown” beginning Monday, January 15th, coinciding with MLK Day, in nonviolent protest of conditions in FL prisons. They are calling it Operation PUSH.

Their primary demands are clear and concise: end prison slavery, stop price gouging, and fully return parole. They believe these issues have directly created the overcrowding that is responsible for the deplorable conditions in Florida prisons.

Their statement also raises other major issues that need to be grappled with, including the death penalty, voting rights and environmental health conditions.

From the communication we have received, these prisoners claim to represent thousands in at least eight facilities already. And say they are prepared to “stay down indefinitely” until someone addresses their concerns.

Among many grievances, the strike centers on several demands:

1. Payment for our labor, rather than the current slave arrangement
2. Ending outrageous canteen prices
3. Reintroducing parole incentives to lifers and those with Buck Rogers dates

In our engagements with prisoners it is important to remember their self determination and approaches to resistance may not always mirror our own on the outside. Our conversation below included a question about previous uprisings in the Florida prisons and the answer may not reflect our own ideas about what is or is not the best approach to resistance. At the end of the day, we’re on the outside and they’re on the inside. It is for the people within the prison walls to determine how best to approach liberation and it is for us to find ways of supporting them, looking for where our struggles for liberation intersect.

Bloc Party: Start by telling us a little about the network of people organizing this protest without giving up anonymity, to help us understand who you are and what experiences you had that lead you here?

Florida Prison Organizer: Operation PUSH, is the network of people organizing this protest. We are a newly founded group who set out to educate all inmates within the FDOC. Most of us inmates, if not all, are aware that we’re being taken advantage of, but some of us don’t know the extent. You’ll do us no injustice if you address us as veterans who has been in the system for quite awhile and has experienced all hardships unimaginable.

Hodgson accused Prisoners’ Legal Services of using the inmates to further their “political agenda” of regulating solitary confinement more closely. The Legislature has passed a criminal justice bill that calls for more oversight of inmate segregation.

“Shame on Prisoners’ Legal Services for trying to use this tactic in such an underhanded way,” he said. “We’re going to fight [this lawsuit], and when the facts come out I think they’re going to be embarrassed that they tried this route.”

The lawsuit states that the suicide rate at Bristol County jails is twice as high as in other county jails in Massachusetts and three times higher than the national rate in jails. In 2016, there were four suicides at the Bristol County Jail, two of them by inmates who were held in segregation, according to the lawsuit.

The New England Center for Investigative Reporting documented suicides at county jails, including those in Bristol, in a report published last May in the *Globe*. Inmates are placed in segregation if jail officials believe they pose a security threat, need protection from other inmates, or are found guilty of a disciplinary infraction.

The inmates want a judge to prevent jail officials from placing inmates with serious mental illness in segregation, develop alternative disciplinary measures for mentally ill inmates, and evaluate inmates for mental health conditions when they arrive at the jail.

Prisoners can spend weeks or even years in segregation, inmates alleged.

The lawsuit was filed by two men and one woman who were placed in segregation despite well-documented mental illness.

Danyel Battle, 27, has a long history of bipolar disorder and depression and has been held at the jail since March 2016. He was placed in segregation for fighting and disobeying orders, impulsive behavior connected to his mental health problems, according to the lawsuit.

Megan Downey, 31, had been hospitalized repeatedly for depression and anxiety. She was sent to solitary for minor infractions, such as receiving a book from another inmate and refusing to share a cell with a woman who had fought with her, according to the suit.

Andy Welch, 43, who was abused as a boy, had a history of suicide attempts and diagnoses of post-traumatic stress disorder and bipolar disorder when he was sentenced to Bristol County Jail in November 2014.

“Nevertheless, he has repeatedly been housed in segregation for prolonged periods, where at times he has become delusional as his mental health deteriorates,” the lawsuit states. Welch has been in segregation for nearly two years.

Medical professionals recommend that jails and prisons identify inmates with serious mental illness and avoid putting them in segregation. But medical records at the jail show there is often no clinical review of inmates before they are segregated, the lawsuit claims.

“When such a clinical review is documented in the records, it often appears to be cursory,” it read.

Mentally ill inmates sue Bristol sheriff over solitary confinement - January 2018

By Maria Cramer

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/01/09/mentally-ill-inmates-sue-bristol-county-sheriff-hodgson-over-solitary-confinement/MMml8yaPeUnnatBEasOmeM/story.html>

Three inmates with serious mental illness filed a lawsuit against officials at the Bristol County Jail Tuesday, alleging they were placed in solitary confinement for at least 22 hours a day while receiving little treatment for their conditions.

“It should be obvious to defendants and to any reasonable person that the conditions imposed [on the inmates] cause tremendous mental anguish, suffering and pain to such individuals,” asserts the lawsuit, filed against Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson and other jail officials in Plymouth Superior Court. “Defendants are deliberately indifferent to the substantial risk of serious harm suffered by plaintiffs.”

The allegations are based on complaints by the inmates and interviews with dozens of former inmates at the Bristol County House of Correction and Jail in North Dartmouth and the Ash Street Jail in New Bedford.

After receiving repeated complaints about the facilities, lawyers from two advocacy groups, Prisoners’ Legal Services of Massachusetts and the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee, interviewed 100 inmates who either had mental health issues or had been put in solitary confinement, also known as segregation. They also reviewed their medical records.

“We had been hearing horror stories for many years from prisoners in Bristol,” said Bonnie Tenneriello, a staff attorney at Prisoners’ Legal Services.

The lawsuit accuses the Bristol County Sheriff’s Office of failing to assess inmates’ mental health history before placing them in segregation or providing effective treatment.

Hodgson sharply denied the allegations in the complaint and said the lawyers had been manipulated by the inmates.

“This lawsuit is riddled with inaccuracies, misconceptions, and out-and-out lies,” he said. “Surprise, surprise, we might have people in our facilities who are not telling the truth.”

Hodgson said state agencies and national accreditation organizations regularly visit the jails and review their policies and procedures toward inmates.

The jails have consistently been found to be in compliance with national standards, Hodgson said. Mental health services are provided by Correctional Psychiatric Services in Braintree, which has decades of experience treating inmates with mental illness.

“I’m going to rely on the experts when I’m deciding how policy is going to work here and how we need to improve our system,” Hodgson said. “I don’t go and ask inmates in a kind of polling situation whether or not they think they’re getting enough food or this or that and rely solely on what they say.”

Bloc Party: The call out for the upcoming protest on January 15th, calls for prisoners to lay down on MLK day this year. What do you mean by that? What does the protest entail?

Florida Prison Organizer: It means to willfully give up our privileges, like making phone calls, buying canteen, visits, and not attain to work assignments.

Bloc Party: We have heard that you are coordinating this protest among prisoners at eight prisons in the Florida prison system. What kind of participation are you expecting?

Florida Prison Organizer: We’re expecting all inmates throughout the state to be in one accord, and act as a unit. Also to be determined to bring changes no matter the cost by standing around doing nothing.

Bloc Party: Earlier this year, we saw uprisings across Florida prisons that resulted in the whole corrections system being put on lock down on Sept 2016. During the national prison strike, prisoners at several Florida facilities participated with media reporting that hundreds at the Holmes facility caused infrastructural damage to almost every dorm in the facility. How has the repression that has followed these uprisings impacted your current planning and tactics?

Florida Prison Organizer: Violence and destructions is not the answer so we’re taking a different approach. Our intentions are to have a peaceful demonstration and simply refuse to work, and buy canteen, visitation, and phones. Use our economical power. These “privileges” are a facade which help them more than it does inmates by boosting their revenues. Boycotting them may temporarily seem like creating burdens for ourselves, but that sacrifice now is worth having a better tomorrow. Or future.

Bloc Party: In the call out for the strike, you say, “If we show them violence they will have a legitimate excuse to use brute force against us and explain to the public that they had to use brute force in order to contain the situations. However, their weakness is their pocket.” Will you elaborate on this tactical decision?

Florida Prison Organizer: In the past violence and destruction has not achieved the desired results. It has only afforded the authorities an excuse to use brute force and portray a negative picture of the inmate population making us appear to be uneducated, violent, and our issues frivolous redirecting the focus of the demonstrations to their advantage. Our power lies in economics, if we Boycott work and give up our so called privileges, it will have a negative impact on the revenue inmates generate through Labor and excessive fees and force change.

Bloc Party: You call for “all organized groups as well as religious systems to come together on the same page.” Are you having any success in convincing prisoners to set aside their racial differences, religious differences or affiliation differences? How divided is the prison population there and what are you doing to build unity?

Florida Prison Organizer: Absolutely! We’ve seen tremendous success on bringing everyone together. Actually, it was easy to convince those organized groups, because anyone who is affiliated has rules to abide by, convince their leaders and the rest will follow. That’s why we spend most of our time educating others, help them see pass their own blindness. After all, the inmates population within the FDOC are not divided as they portray them to be, all of us knows that we’re all we got, it’s always us against them

Bloc Party: What can people on the outside do to help you with the protest?

Florida Prison Organizer: Help us reach other prisoners with this plan, because it'll take all of us as a whole to create this platform so our voice can be heard.

Bloc Party: What else do you want us to know?

Florida Prison Organizer: Basically we are open to helpful suggestions and are very appreciative of all support.



Boise, ID - September 2017

In June, the Nevada Department of Corrections transferred me to Idaho. Since my transfer I have begun receiving the much needed medical treatment that I've been longing for: Estrogen and testosterone blocker. Overall the system is a lot better for me here as a transgender woman. However, there are still a lot of struggles and issues that transgenders face in the prison system. I will continue to advocate and fight for change.

I still have an active case in the US Dist. Court in Nev. U.S. Dist Trost v. Cox 3:14-CU-00611 MMD WGC regarding transgender issues. I also filed an appeal to my name change to that of Daisy Meadows and will now reapply for a legal change of name here in Idaho. In addition to that, I'm also going to file a new civil rights complaint here in Idaho to fight for the trans community.

Most trans feel hopeless and defenseless, subjected to threats, retaliation, beatings, repressive or conversion therapy, mind control, and worse.

Girls, please be strong and stick together. We all might not get along but don't divide on the issues we all relate to and the issues that really matter to us as a whole. I love you all, be proud, and keep your heads up. Keep fighting, unite and stand tall. Stand up for yourselves and your sisters and your rights. Help and change is coming. We have to hold onto hope and our injustices will be brought to light and everyone will see just how corrupt and cruel the DOC is and see clearly just how much they hate and are disgusted by Trans women that have done nothing to deserve the horrible treatment and abuse we receive.

Girls, you are not alone. There are people out there who care and who are fighting. I will never give up.

In Solidarity,

Miss R. Trost a.k.a. Daisy Meadows
#124194
ISCI Unit 16
PO Box 14
Boise, ID 83707

Illinois Department of Corrections mental health staff denial of inmate treatment at Pontiac Corr Center - September 2017

I'm writing this story on the Pontiac Correctional Center 'cause I have been down here for about 14 years and I have seen Mental Health staff and Corrections Officers work together and they don't help inmates down here. There was a lawsuit filed on the Mental Health cause they were not assisting or helping inmates with their issues. So when the lawsuit was in the Central District Court the inmates won the Class Action Lawsuit, but Pontiac Corr. Center does not follow the rules 'cause they are supposed to pull us out and talk with us but they still come and see us at our cell and they aren't supposed to as well and they are still not doing Group sometimes. We have a Mental Health staff named Heather Kaine. She rides with the Security Staff on inmates and she doesn't follow rules and has taken a lot of inmates off SMI as well. It needs to be fixed. The name of the case is Rasho vs. Baldwin 07-C.U.-1298. You can look up this case 'cause this is a civil case and we need more lawyers to get involved with us. You can contact me about this issue. I will let you know more. Just read and contact me. This is my information. Please, let's change together.

Darrell Drummond R-19802
Pontiac Corr. Center
700 W. Lincoln St.
PO Box 99
Pontiac, IL 61769

Updates on Operation PUSH in the Florida Department of Corrections - January 2018

From <https://fighttoxicprisons.wordpress.com/>

It's been a hard silence for the past five days since prisoners calling themselves Operation PUSH launched a statewide prisoner strike in the FL Department of Corrections prison system (FDOC or FDC) coinciding with Martin Luther King Day.

Information from prisoners is coming in at a much slower pace than people on the outside had anticipated, but reports are slowly and steadily making their way through the walls, despite many obstacles.

Thus far, we've heard from prisoners that there has been active participation or repression of some sort in the following prisons: Santa Rosa, Jackson, Gulf, Hamilton, Avon Park, Franklin, Holmes, Everglades, Reception and Medical Center at Lake Butler, Liberty, Lowell, Columbia, Florida State Prison, Suwannee, Calhoun, and Martin. (The list is growing by the day.)

A common theme among report backs is the attempt by the DOC to sever communication in order to create the perception of inactivity and break the spirits of those participating in the strike. Key contacts inside have reported being threatened by administration with harsher retaliation if correspondence with advocacy groups such as Fight Toxic Prisons and Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee continues.

According to prisoner reports, some facilities have shut off state phone service as of Tuesday, January 16. A Security Threat Group (STG) investigator employed at a prison in the panhandle confirmed that multiple prisons across the state were placed on lockdown in preparation for the strike. Shakedowns have occurred where independent means of communication were confiscated and their alleged owners/users were thrown in solitary confinement.

We've heard reports that widespread investigations are occurring for anyone who has received or sent mail to organizations offering support on the outside and certain individuals are being labelled a "security threat" for doing so. This can result in heightened custody levels, which means a loss of privileges, and continued harassment by the STG unit. One prisoner was told, "As long as you communicate with these people you're always going to be labelled a security threat and you're always going to be put under investigation."

Given the past two years of prisoner organizing in Florida, it's understandable that there is an expectation to hear of something distinct on the inside marking the start of the strike.

The movement on the inside of Florida's prison system has become known for its moments of upheaval and crackdown, such as the unexpected uprising at Holmes CI on Sept 7, 2016, two days prior to the national wave of prisoner-led actions commemorating the Attica anniversary... followed by uprisings at 10 other facilities which had little-to-no known previous connection to outside support.

In most of those cases, the publicity about September 2016 surrounded a violent state repression that turned entire prison dorm units into battle zones. But

what was gathered in prisoner correspondence months later was that most of the resistance began as quiet acts of non-cooperation among small groups.

The following year, surrounding a prisoner rights march in DC on Aug 19, the state extremely overreacted by placing all of its 97,000 prisoners on simultaneous lockdown, putting FL on the map once again.

Thus far, Operation PUSH has been something different. It's shown lessons learned on both sides of this war. (Yes, a war, still being fought ultimately between the people who want to continue slavery and the ones who want to end it.)

Operation PUSH did not call for rebellions in the prisons, which are relatively frequent occurrences in Florida. Though they are bold and courageous acts, those events have not been as effective in the communication of clear, specific demands such as PUSH has presented.

Operation PUSH repeatedly called for the slow and steady process of economic impact through non-participation. In response to this, the DOC appears to be using a different approach of low-intensity, psychological warfare rather than blunt force.

In the absence of news reports about brutal repression and destructive responses, and as a result of reduced communication access, we are left to wonder about details of what's actually going on inside. Much of this may have to wait for firsthand accounts to surface via postal mail.

It should come as no surprise that the DOC can't be trusted to report strikes occurring in Florida state prisons, just as they have been lying, or to borrow from a PUSH prisoner, "using wordplay," around the rip-off of their canteen prices. They have been working for weeks to eliminate the chance of the strike's success. Claiming that it never existed is another tactic for trying to stop it. Never trust the oppressors to adequately report the facts.

Beyond this, organizers on the outside have conducted public records requests indicating that the DOC has been monitoring dozens of organizations for months in an effort to undermine inside/outside alliances. Clearly the DOC views our organizing as more than a minor inconvenience.

One drawback of having the build-up of public support grow for weeks on the outside is that it provided ample notification and time for the DOC to bribe, threaten and gather scab labor. Prisoners who aren't engaged with the movement are able to replace participants in Operation PUSH and conduct the major operations needed to keep the slave camps running (food, cleaning, etc.)

This repression has made it hard to quantify participation, and word of the widespread support and solidarity actions are only now beginning to trickle in through news reports and letter writing events occurring all over the country.

Because Florida's DOC practices such harsh retaliation against the people in its care and control, groups on the outside decided to deliver the prisoners' demands.

Starting as early as New Year's Eve, Operation PUSH solidarity protests across Florida have included demonstrations at the Gainesville Work Camp prison, a Miami parole office and The Lake Butler Reception/Medical Center prison, with hundreds of participants being seen and heard directly by thousands of prisoners and DOC employees at these facilities.

On Tuesday, January 16, a 5-hour takeover of the DOC lobby in Tallahassee

THE ALMIGHTY PEN AND PAPER: GRIEVANCES AND LEGAL WORK

Richmond, TX - December 2017

Greetings of peace and revolutionary salute to all my struggling comrades within this system of oppression and injustice.

I was transferred because the racist white Major ordered me to cut my religious beard off, and when I refused I was locked in Segregation for 9 months, and after the administration received notice I was going to file a civil claim against them, I was immediately transferred here. I have no problems with Black officials, but the Caucasian staff seem to have a personal hatred for the Islamic prisoners and Black men with beards, that cause them to file frivolous disciplinary reports against me. This causes me to fight back, by filing my grievance and threatening to seek federal action with the courts. This is viewed by fellow prisoners as causing myself unnecessary problems. But please be advised, we are now allowed to wear our beards up to 4 to 6 inches, wear our kufis anywhere now. I'm now frequently asked to help my fellow prisoners with their legal and grievance complaints. I have learned to make changes for the better good, for all!

Sincerely,

Randy (Shabbazz) Bowden
#1827604
Jester 3 Unit
3 Jester Rd.
Richmond, TX 77406

Menard, IL - October 2017

Greetings comrades,

I'm writing you this scribe from the pit here inside Menard Correctional Center to inform you on our resistance. Last year I took North 2 General Population yard hostage and refused all orders from the warden on down to come off the yard peacefully. Believe it or not, none of the prisoners from 7 gallery North 2 in Menard who was on the yard stood firm with me. All of them left the yard as soon as the oppressors' correctional officers ordered them off the yard. Believe it or not, I didn't expect none of them dudes to ride with me and didn't ask them to either. Although correctional officers swear I did, they are mistakenly wrong. After about two hours of resistance and showing nothing but ultimate disrespect to these pigs like they do us every chance they get, they sent in the tactical team to get me off the yard, about 8 or 9 big white pigs who attacked me called me a nigger numerous times as they pepper sprayed me and beat me up while yelling "stop resisting," smashing my face into the ground, kicking and punching me all over my body. Then they took me to the health care unit, pushed on me again, and refused to give me any medical treatment for my injuries. I was then placed in a van with three pigs and driven to Pontiac Correctional Center to serve 9 months in the hole. While at Pontiac, word came to me that the comrades in the west house in the pit at Menard Correctional Center made a similar stand. They refused to come off the yard, about 50 or so prisoners resisting all orders from these pigs for hours, then the warden convinced them the administration would meet their demands if they came off the yard. So they came off the yard and were escorted back to their assigned cells. The warden then sent the tactical team to each of their cells, put their asses on a bus, and shipped them off to other prisons all over the state of Illinois. Some got segregation time, and some got Administrative Detention (A.D.). I'm telling you this story cause in resistance there is no such thing as surrender or retreat, and the next time we resist the only thing we should be saying in a loud voice is no surrender, no retreat, no surrender, no retreat, no surrender, no retreat. It's us against them by any and all means necessary. The key advance we got on them, they come to work expecting to return home, so it's only so much they are willing to do, especially if our hands and legs are free of shackles. A lot of us are expected to die here in prison and a lot of us have already died in prison, may their souls RIP. With this being said, we have nothing to lose, and everything to gain. "Give me liberty or give me death." Whether innocent or guilty we are all treated the same and have the same common enemy. I say unite and fight until the end.

Indeed your brother,

Vernon Tolbert #B45914
PO Box 1000
Menard, IL 62259

occurred, demanding a meeting with DOC Secretary Julie Jones, which resulted in protestors being forcefully evicted from the building and an arrest in which a protestor is facing a bogus felony charge related to small amount of damaged property. The response to this protest by FDOC was similar to what we have come to expect: repression and deception. After attacking protestors in their lobby, they released a statement saying they were "battered" by PUSH supporters.

Despite the repression and lies, support for Operation PUSH is massively intensifying the public pressure on the DOC and that is an undeniable early victory of the movement five days into it. At the time of this writing, there are almost 150 organizations who have expressed explicit endorsement nationwide, contributing social media support, solidarity actions, letter-writing events and fundraising. There have already been over 40 stories in the news, including major national and international outlets.

What's next?

Over the coming weeks, organizers on the outside with IWOC and FTP will be gathering correspondence from the inside and releasing periodical updates, coupled with individualized support campaigns, as we have been doing over the past 2 years. Several hundred strike support yard signs were printed for statewide distribution and a new phone zap campaign will be released shortly.

The DOC is pretending to ignore Operation PUSH by issuing meaningless statements and attempting to confuse people over canteen prices (citing the cost of a single soup, when prisoners' statement referred to cost for a case.) Make no mistake. They are far from ignoring the strikers, and it is far from over.

January 15 in Florida was a major step in building up the movement to end prison slavery that is brewing on a national scale. It has sown seeds for the months ahead. Prisoners in Texas have already called for renewing the celebration of the Juneteenth abolitionist holiday and spreading it into prisons worldwide. We are considering Operation PUSH as important and necessary groundwork for making that successful.

In the meantime, keep in touch via SPARC, IWOC, and FTP.

Additional Notes:

** Florida's Dept. of Corrections had gone by FDOC until last year. In attempt to dodge the negative association of the DOC, they began re-branding themselves at FDC.*

** PUSH is not an acronym, as far as anyone on the outside has been told. It appears to be capitalized as an emphasis on action it implies, perhaps akin to the MOVE Organization.*

** Please send any news, photos, or videos to FightToxicPrisons@gmail.com*

If you would like to subscribe to Fight Toxic Prisons,
please contact them at:

Fight Toxic Prisons,
43 South Main Street, Gainesville FL 32601



Incarcerated Florida organizer and Minister of Defense of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party (Prison Chapter) Kevin "Rashid" Johnson is facing political repression in the form of an "inciting a riot" charge for reporting on Operation PUSH.

Image from <https://fighttoxicprisons.wordpress.com/>

Jail and housing units M-5 and M-8 in Elmwood D.O.C. for courageously sacrificing all their custody meals to be donated to the homeless and hungry at Emmanuel House Salvation Army. We also appreciate all efforts made between jail administrators, community organizations and the jail population to come to an agreement to meet the five core demands to end meaningless classification reviews, indefinite solitary confinement, group punishment, cruel and unusual punishment during out of cell time, and rigid visitation policies.

FACTS THAT REFUTE SHERIFF SMITH'S COMMENT:

- Over 70% of the Santa Clara County jail population is pretrial – meaning they have not been convicted of a crime.

- Being in jail does not automatically mean someone is a gang member, according to the JFA Institute Jail Classification System Evaluation audit prepared by James Austin in 2016, there is only 21 verified prison gang members in Santa Clara County.

- Prisoners United of Silicon Valley is the collective voice of the entire Santa Clara County jail population including all classification/security levels, color tops, racial groups (Black, White, Asian, Latino, Pacific Islander etc.) and creeds and is not lead by one man alone.

- Salvation Army is a tremendous community resource for those in need, including programs for those who have been convicted of a crime.

FURTHER DETAILS/CLARIFICATIONS:

Santa Clara County jail administrators came to an agreement to meet the five core demands to end meaningless classification reviews, indefinite solitary confinement, group punishment, cruel and unusual punishment during out of cell time, and rigid visitation policies. However, the administration stated it will take three weeks for the new classification system to kick in.

According to the agreement, the classification system will have face-to-face hearings, opportunity for prisoners to call witnesses to speak in their defense, the use of things such as education and rehabilitation certificates to have influence on their hearings, and the opportunity to contest anything. The administration also agreed to suspend all in-custody inputs until the new system is in place. Prisoners in the jails should also be able to see what is in their file. Captains Grumbos and Taylor finalized agreements with some of the prisoners inside. The challenge of only having 35 classification officers is still a question.

Prisoners United in Santa Clara County jails win Five core demands & sacrifice Three days of custody meals for the hungry - October 2017

<https://prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com/2017/10/31/prisoners-united-in-santa-clara-county-jails-win-5-core-demands-sacrifice-3-days-of-custody-meals-for-the-hungry/>

Though a hunger strike in Santa Clara County jails could have been avoided after jail administrators agreed to meet the core demands during the week of October 16, 2017 — Prisoners United on every floor of the Main Jail and M-5 and M-8 lockdown units in Elmwood D.O.C. refused custody meals in protest of Sheriff Smith's insulting comment in the media. On October 19th, when asked about the possible hunger strike and jail conditions, Sheriff Smith told San Jose Inside, "We do not allow gangs to run the jails—and some of them could stand to lose a little weight. We will give their fresh food to the Salvation Army again. There are hungry people who committed no crimes and deserve a dinner."

On October 22, 2017, Prisoners United reverted to the hunger strike to demand accountability from Sheriff Smith of Santa Clara County to do as she claimed and donate refused meals to the hungry and homeless community at the Salvation Army who are in fact largely gang impacted, overcoming drug and alcohol dependency and formerly incarcerated. In addition, Prisoners United demanded accountability from Sheriff Smith to courageously make public the efforts between jail administrators, community organizations and the jail population to come to an agreement to meet the core demands. Unfortunately, Sheriff Smith's comment carried a tone to rogue deputies and sergeants who responded with lockdowns, shakedown, and canceled family visits.

Prisoners United sacrificed 3 days of custody meals to see to it that all custody meals, including their prepared cooked meals will in fact be donated. Although Sheriff Smith tweeted donating non-perishable lunch box custody meals to the Emmanuel House Salvation Army earlier on Monday October 23, 2017; prepared custody meals have been confirmed to have been thrown away or given as an incentive to non-participants. There are still remains challenges of any public mention of the efforts between jail administrators, community organizations and the jail population to come to an agreement to meet the core demands, nor a written document to of said agreement.

For clarity, Prisoners United protest of Sheriff Smith's comments ended on the evening of October 24, 2017 and is slowly trickling down to every floor in the Main Jail as days pass. The M-8 lockdown unit in Elmwood D.O.C.'s first meal after a three day strike was their prepared cooked dinner meal at 4:00 PM on October 25, 2017. The 6C Sureno unit in the Main Jail will still continue their hunger strike until an agreement is made with jail administrators to end their protective custody status in their classification file.

Silicon Valley De-Bug thanks Prisoners United on every floor in the Main

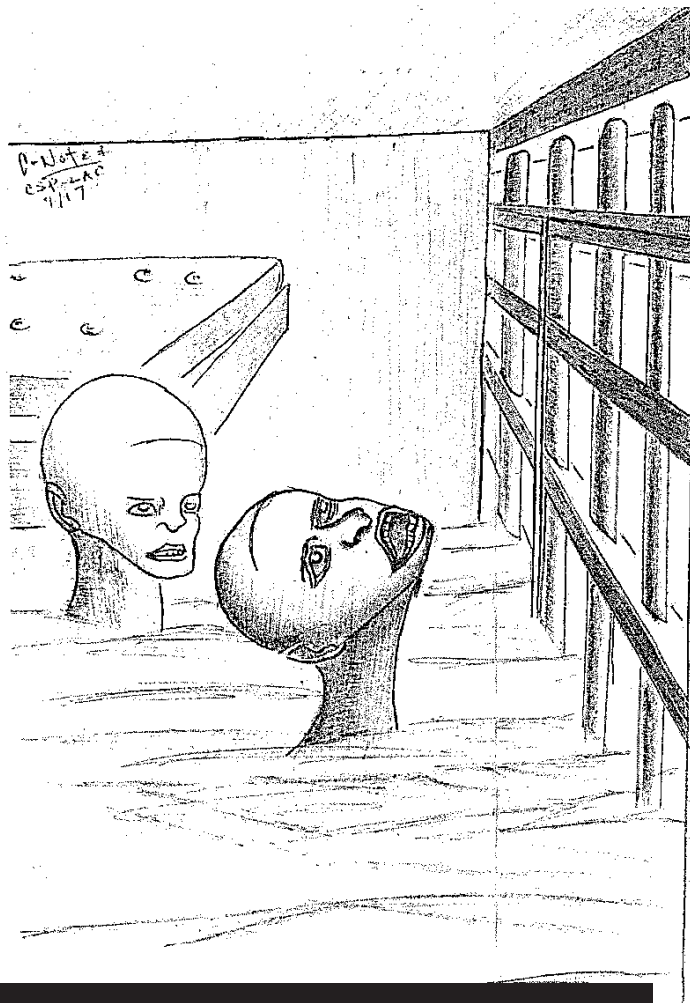
Carrabelle, FL - September 2017

Hi, I hope this submission finds you all in the best of mind, body, health, and spirit. Although my name is Jose, I go by the name of Go-Get-Her. I'm a Trans locked up in FL DOC. At the moment I'm confined in confinement. I'm doing 60 days D.C. plus I'm on P.M. status. At this camp I'm being targeted and discriminated against due to my sexuality. This institution is about 80% gang populated. The people here are anti-gay and homophobic. I'm in confinement because when I got released on this pound, I was housed in G-dorm. G-dorm is the only dorm that my custody and housing level allows me to be housed in. G-dorm is also about 80% gang populated. I was the only gay individual in the whole dorm. And although I tried to mind my own business and be myself, I was still discriminated against and targeted. I was told that I was not allowed to shower until everyone else in the dorm showered. When I spoke my mind and stated that I was not going to wait to be last, I was threatened to be jumped-raped-and-stabbed. So I went to the officer station and declared a psychological emergency out of fear of being jumped-raped-and-stabbed. I was taken to the infirmary over the weekend. I barely slept, I refused most of my trays. While I was in SHOS cell most of my property was stolen and my ID card was used to purchase canteen. \$85.44 was stolen. All due to the C.O.'s failure to retrieve my property once I was placed in cuffs. On Monday I was seen by mental health and although I have a history of mental health problems and have taken medication off and on throughout the years since 1997, and told her that I was not feeling well, that I was hearing voices, hallucinating, and feeling suicidal. She still discharged me back to open population and refused to provide me with mental health. I was placed in confinement for refusing to get dressed and return to G-dorm. Out of desperation while in confinement I busted the fire sprinkler so that I would get transferred to another prison. I'm also on P.M. trying to get transferred, and that's how I'm doing 60-DC and am on P.M.

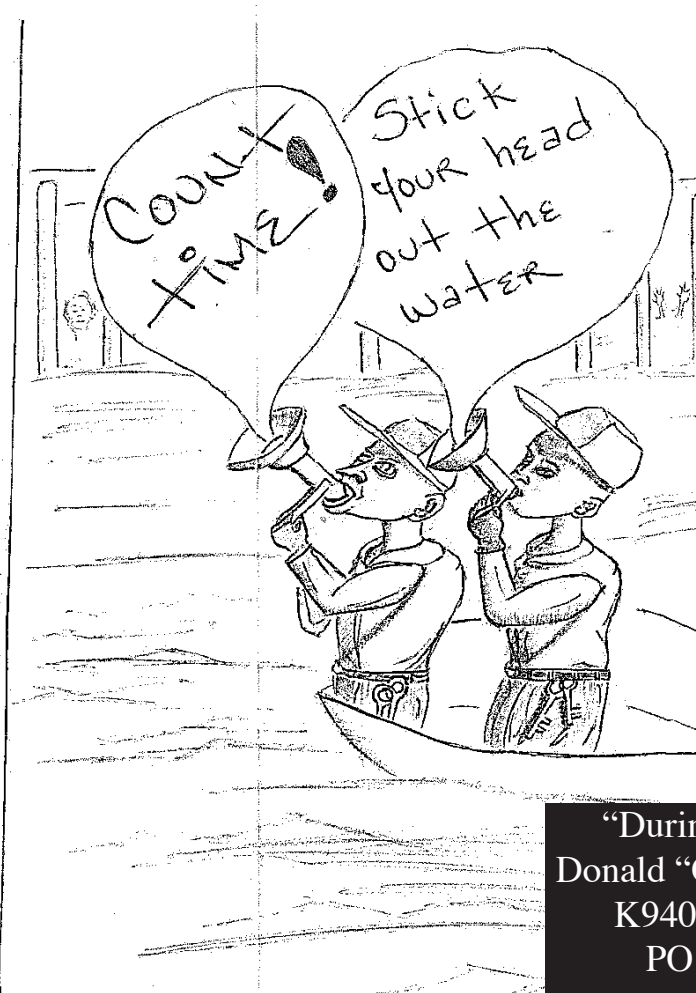
Well, if anyone can help me and/or have any suggestions don't hesitate to write me and put me up on game. A shout out to my L.G.B.Q.T. community. I love you all!

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“During the Flood” is a piece inspired by Hurricane Harvey and its impact on the prisoners in the prisons that were flooded out by the storm. The photojournalism that was done failed in actually telling the story of this human distress. The photojournalism that was done on the storm’s impact on assisted living facilities was quite impactful, as the cameras had access to their living conditions, but no photojournalistic access was given to record the actual conditions the prisoners found themselves in. Images only existed post rescue. While Harvey was a tragedy, the impact of prisons affected by flooding first came to light during Hurricane Katrina.



“During the Flood”
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The role of the artist is not to tell the story, but make their readers, seers, or listeners to feel the story. The title, “During the Flood,” was specifically chosen over naming the piece specific to Hurricane Harvey. There will be other floods in other parts of the country. “During the Flood,” in conjunction with the prison publication community, is to hopefully inspire the dialogue between state officials responsible for housing these prisoners, and the local first responders who also will be involved in some sort of evacuation of distressed human beings within their local jurisdiction. It is my hope that the state’s response to such a crisis is more in line with being humane, rather than the clinical response seen in “During the Flood.”